CCGB Meeting Agenda, September 14, 2007

1. Approval of minutes
2. Undergraduate announcements
3. Discussion of introductory biology with members of task force on undergraduate biology teaching
4. Reports from committee chairs on recent/current business.

CCGB Minutes, September 7, 2007

Ex-Officio: B. East, R. Robbins, L. Schneider, F. Shumway, M. Spencer
Other: C. Pakkala, N. Peterson

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the 8/31/07 Minutes was postponed until changes made by S. Baker could be incorporated. Approval is to be done at the 9/14/07 meeting.

Undergraduate Announcements: B. East stated that there is a new access to student records policy. Undergraduate students are now looked at by the university as dependent students. In Engineering, K. Fuchs (or one of his designees--D. Gries, B. East or R. Robbins) can contact parents about a student’s academic record at their discretion. Parents will be automatically notified when unaffiliated students are withdrawn from the University, when they take a leave of absence, or when the student is enrolled in a semester with conditions to be met for continued enrollment at Cornell. Departments should contact K. Fuchs or one of the designees prior to LOA or other leaves. It is best to let a student know prior to notifying their parents. The college is working on a policy for communications about leaves, withdrawals and conditional enrollment for affiliated students. A proposal will be brought to the CCGB to decide how to implement this. L. Pollack mentioned that she has a conditional letter ready to go to a student and wondered if this policy is to take effect now. B. East replied that it is effective immediately and suggested that the two of them work on how the parents should be notified.

S. Baker stated that he assumed that FERPA made this type of decision. The usual way to communicate with parents is to put their kid on leave. He is curious about who made this interpretation. B. East responded that FERPA says that grades are private, but Cornell is changing the view that undergraduates are dependent rather than independent. This makes a difference. The Provost and Dean are assuming that they are dependent, as they are for tax purposes. Graduate students are viewed as independent. E. Fisher asked if an emancipated minor could show that they are independent and have their information remain private. B. East replied that they would have to prove that they are independent. S. Baker stated that sometimes he gives conditions to a student and then reviews their case. He wondered if they would have to specify in a letter that the student would be withdrawn if conditions were not met. B. East replied that we don’t want to change the way academic actions are done to meet policy. We would only tell the parents if a student is withdrawn or is subject to withdrawal or mandatory leave, conditional on academic performance. The policy has not officially been written. A committee is going to revise the current policy. Colleges are all in the same position of trying to decide what to do with withdrawn students or those put on mandatory leaves. We have contacted parents in the past about students if we have been concerned about the safety of a student.

June ’07 Math Placement Exam: F. Shumway administered the online math exam, which shows a readiness of students to take Math 191. She is still putting a report together on the results of the exam. The preliminary numbers are encouraging. Last year 36% of freshmen took exam; it increased to 46% this year. She is waiting for AP data now. The new process with students getting their net IDs after giving Cornell a deposit was helpful and enabled students to take the math exam in a timely fashion. The
net ID process also enabled Advising to communicate with the students via email earlier, which was helpful. F. Shumway and L. Pollack will evaluate the exam results soon. J. Bartsch asked how many students took the makeup exam for Math 191 or 192. R. Robbins replied that he was not sure, but he would contact the Math Department for that information.

**AEM Minor:** B. East stated that a business minor has been developed for engineering students, but previously only about 10 slots were available in the minor. We now have a donor who will contribute a substantial sum of money to teach the course, and there will be about 75 slots available for engineers in the business minor. Students can apply for acceptance into the minor during their sophomore year. We think that it will be a highly selective process. ORIE does not want their students to participate in the minor. The donor really wants typical engineers (CEE, MAE, etc.) to take this. The application is available on the web, and information is on the web and in the Engineering Handbook. There are minor application forms in the Advising Office. Students could apply after their sophomore year, but they might not get admitted into it. Students admitted into the minor will have preferential admittance into the courses. J. Bartsch asked who decides if the students are admitted to the minor. B. East replied that last year Dale Grossman decided; this year we hope to put a group together to make the decisions. We think this minor will be really popular and will be a nice option for our students. E. Fisher said that she gets questions about minors given outside engineering and wondered if they are possible for our students to take. R. Robbins said that it’s fine if they can find another minor in another college that engineers are allowed to participate in. They can use minor courses for liberal studies electives or other electives.

**Orientation:** F. Shumway expressed her thanks to everyone for all of their help during orientation. Advising had a debriefing meeting, and everyone said that everything seemed to go smoothly. It was helpful to have a full staff. There were lots of positive comments from parents that indicated they were happy with it and it went well. R. Robbins stated that he would like to see an orientation assessment done university-wide. He didn’t hear complaints about the event.

**CHEM 209:** F. Shumway said that this year was the first year of CHEM 209 instead of CHEM 207. There is still some switching around happening, but 473 students were enrolled in CHEM 209 as of August 31. There were 499 in CHEM 207/211 combined last year, so the CHEM 209 enrollment process seems to be working. None of our engineers are enrolled in CHEM 207. S. Baker asked if engineering students are banned from CHEM 207. F. Shumway replied that engineers are not allowed to take CHEM 207, but if they need to take it due to scheduling conflicts, that would be fine.

S. Baker said that CHEM 209 is much more quantitative than CHEM 207. CHEM 207 is primarily for pre-meds, and engineers blow the curve for them. D. Zax and Garnet Chan spent lot of time on the curriculum. The topical order is different in CHEM 207 and CHEM 209 due to lab conflicts, and there is more math in CHEM 209. E. Fisher asked how many students take introductory chemistry in their second semester. F. Shumway replied that CHEM 209 will be offered each semester. The ChemE students and premeds want CHEM 208. 170 freshmen got a 5 on AP Chemistry, and they could have placed out of CHEM 209.

**New Business:** E. Fisher stated that there will be an ABET visit in 2010. This year is a good time to review the common curriculum. We need to review the ENGRD, ENGRI, and ENGRG courses. The Engineering Course Committee is to review them. We need to get reports from instructors, or perhaps reports were collected last year but not reviewed.
E. Fisher announced that there are small changes for the ME Minor. The minor is currently broad, and MAE wants to restrict the number of courses taken as independent study. M. Spencer asked if the Aerospace Minor is available for students in any discipline. E. Fisher replied to date no majors have denied permission to take the minor to their students, and the MAE website has a list of departments that have agreed to let their students take the minor. L. Pollack said that she has a lot of students interested in the minor, but there were some unresolved issues, which she would bring up with E. Fisher.

E. Fisher stated that lots of students want credit for the AP statistics exam, but that is not currently possible in the college. She thought the AP statistics issue was reviewed and not deemed equivalent to ENGRD 270. Some departments have a statistics requirement separate from that course, and maybe AP credit would be appropriate to satisfy that. This is the Math Subcommittee’s business. L. Pollack asked if there were any other case where AP substitutes for a 200-level course. E. Fisher replied that chemistry does. S. Baker said that the Engineering Task Force discussed whether statistics should be required, and their feeling was that it would be good for engineers. It needs to be course that could use Math 293/294 as a math pre-requisite or a co-requisite. An AP exam couldn’t do that. E. Fisher suggested that we may need to get information from departments as to what statistics requirements they have. No one at the meeting was aware of relevant statistics requirements at a lower level than ENGRD 270. This issue will be revisited in the future.

L. Pollack said that an issue came up with the Physics Subcommittee. They want to reconsider allowing AP Credit to get substitute for Physics 213. Skipping Physics 213 is really detrimental for many students. They see students who go into Physics 214 and don’t perform well at all; this has a major impact on their choice of major. Math rolled back the AP requirement, and students can only get out of Math 191; perhaps something similar is needed in Physics.

S. Baker stated that the Student Experience Surveys indicated that students want to take classes but can’t due to restrictions. Courses are stacked on top of each other in engineering. When asked if they would be willing to take classes at 8 or 9 AM, students uniformly said no. It would be worth having a discussion to see if we want this culture to change. We have trouble scheduling rooms for courses. We even have this issue with required courses. M. Duncan said that the College increasingly demands class-rooms for ENGRD’s and ENGRG’s, and moving classes to earlier time slots would help.

F. Shuwmay said that there is an issue of when students take equivalent math or physics courses at other institutions with fewer credits than our courses are. What do we do about that extra credit? We currently have the students petition to pull an unneeded credit from an elective. We talked about maybe forgiving that extra credit.

E. Fisher asked chairs of committees to come back to the CCGB to report on what they did recently and what issues they are facing.

**Introductory Biology:** E. Fisher stated that next week someone from the Undergraduate Biology Curriculum Task Force will come and want to hear our input about the introductory biology plan. This report hasn’t been made public to the people who will be teaching the courses yet. She wondered if the core would work for biology-oriented students in engineering departments. She spoke with L. Bonassar, who felt that BME students would be taking core courses. L. Pollack emphasized that the core courses are time-intensive, serious courses that don’t depend on each other. The current introductory biology course sequence is going away for biology majors—BIO 101-104 is being revamped. J. Bartsch stated that the BEE students will have students taking the core courses because they will need serious biology
in their major. A large number of students are also pre-meds and will need serious biology. Students need preparation to get into the advanced courses. E. Fisher said that if we like the 3B, Introductory Biology for Physical Scientists, we will need to argue for it. J. Bartsch asked how many majors will have students who need or want biology. L. Pollack said that AEP has about 5 students in every class who take biology 101-104 because they have an interest in biophysics. AEP wants to serve those students. L. Lee said that CS has about the same number of students interested in computational biology. W. Philpot said that he likes option 3B if it is geared toward engineers. S. Baker thinks that if we offer it and students could take it, many students would like to take it. L. Pollack said that BIO doesn’t have to be required now, but we start by offering it as an elective. Discussion of this will continue next time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.